
U.S. Department of Justice



United States Attorney's Office Eastern District of Virginia

Chuck Rosenberg - United States Attorney

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INTERNATIONAL MONEY LAUNDERERS/DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED

(Alexandria, VA) - Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that seven individuals were arrested on June 1 and 2, 2006, and charged by criminal complaints in the Eastern District of Virginia following a two-year investigation into allegations of drug trafficking, money laundering, and arms dealing. Alexandre de Basseville, age 35, of Switzerland and Los Angeles, California, and Bruno d'Esclavelles, age 45, of Los Angeles, were arrested in Arlington, Virginia, and charged with conspiracy to distribute MDMA (ecstasy). Thomas Frischknecht, age 26, of Switzerland, was arrested in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and charged with conspiracy to import ecstasy. Authorities also arrested Fabian Pruvot, age 37, David Liberman, age 32, Andre Prikazhikov, age 31, and Brian Delansky, age 33, all of Los Angeles, California. Pruvot and Liberman were charged with conspiracy to launder money. Prikazhikov and Delansky were charged with conspiracy to possess firearms in furtherance of drug trafficking.

According to criminal complaints filed in federal court, Alexandre de Basseville met repeatedly with undercover agents, over the past two years, posing as international drug traffickers. De Basseville offered to launder drug proceeds, supply weapons and broker ecstasy deals for the undercover agents. The agents met with de Basseville and several of his associates, including the other six individuals charged, in various locations, including Arlington, Virginia; Miami, Florida; Los Angeles, California, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and Geneva, Switzerland. On two occasions, de Basseville and d'Esclavelles took cash, totaling \$300,000, which they believed to be drug proceeds, and laundered it for the undercover agents using their Los Angeles business, Limelight Films, Inc.

In February 2006, de Basseville and d'Esclavelles arranged for the sale of ecstasy from the Netherlands by Thomas Frischknecht to an undercover agent. Frischknecht sent the agent a package containing 10,000 pills, which the agent received in Arlington, Virginia. Thereafter, de Basseville, d'Esclavelles and Frischknecht agreed to sell the agent 500,000 pills in the Netherlands. Frischknecht was arrested in the Netherlands as the undercover agent negotiated for the delivery of 500,000 ecstasy pills.

This case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Internal Revenue Service; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Customs Border Patrol; Arlington County Police Department, Metropolitan (D.C.) Police Department. The United States Attorney's Office also received considerable assistance from law enforcement authorities in the Netherlands and Switzerland. The case is an OCDETF (Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force) investigation. The prosecution of the case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorneys James L. Trump and Steven D. Mellin and Special Assistant United States Attorney Daniel Grooms.

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